

Equal Opportunities Policy

Background

The Resuscitation Council UK [RCUK] is an equal opportunity organisation. In accordance with the Equality Act (2010)¹ we are committed to ensuring within the framework of the law that we, and our course providers, operate in an environment which is free of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age (“Protected Characteristics”).

Candidates with disabilities are eligible to undertake RCUK life support courses.

We aim to ensure that all candidates achieve their full potential and, that all decisions that are taken with regard to a course of study that is endorsed by the Council are taken without reference to irrelevant or discriminatory criteria. We have adopted the following equal opportunities policy as a means of helping to achieve these aims.

Implementation of equality of opportunity

1. Applications

Decisions concerning course participation will be made on the basis of fair and objective criteria.

Course selection criteria will be limited to those that are required for the effective participation on the course and responsibility for this is delegated to the course centre.

Candidates should notify the Course Director of any disability before the start of the course, in order that reasonable adjustments can be made. The Course Director will investigate what reasonable efforts can be made to accommodate the candidate’s requirements where “substantial disadvantage” may occur. Any changes made by the provider should not cause a deterioration in the experience or training of other candidates.

2. “Reasonable Adjustments”²

The requirements of candidates who have or have had a disability will be reviewed by the Course Centre to ensure that wherever possible, reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to effectively undertake a course of study.

Course Centres will be expected to ensure that opportunities for candidates with a disability will not be unreasonably limited and every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that disabled candidates receive appropriate support. Practical examples of “reasonable adjustments” include:

- ✓ **making changes to the physical surroundings**
- ✓ **if a disabled candidate is physically unable to undertake a task, it may be possible to allow the candidate to instruct a proxy**
- ✓ **the early distribution of, or access to course materials to candidates with dyslexia or with other recognised specific learning needs**
- ✓ **the allocation of extra time for reading**
- ✓ **“access adjustments”³ such as additional support staff etc.**
- ✓ **subject to individual needs, additional time (i.e. 25% extra time, rounded up to the nearest minute) to complete the post course MCQ.**

Centres should refer to their own Trust/employer policy and receive local training to enable provision of equality of opportunity.

3. Certification

The award by the RCUK of a Certificate of Qualification (whilst not a certificate of competence nor a licence to practise) indicates that a candidate has successfully completed a course and, by inference, has undertaken active participation. It should be acknowledged that, in some circumstances a disabled candidate might successfully pass all of the theoretical aspects of a course but, due to a disability, be unable to complete all of the physical course requirements.

For reasons in the interests of patient health and safety, employers are directly responsible for establishing that their staff have the capabilities requisite to their clinical role. Employers should not rely – to any extent – on the holding by an individual of a Certificate of Qualification from the RCUK as diminishing this responsibility.

- 1 The Equality Act 2010 Indirect disability discrimination happens when there is a rule, a policy or even a practice that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people with a particular disability, and it cannot be shown to be justified as being intended to meet a legitimate objective in a fair, balanced and reasonable way. As with discrimination arising from a disability, it is necessary to strike a balance between the negative impact of the rules and practices on some people and the reasons for applying them.
- 2 What is reasonable will depend on all the circumstances, including the cost of an adjustment, the potential benefit it might bring to other customers, the resources an organisation has and how practical the changes are.
- 3 ‘Access Arrangements’ are there so all candidates can access the exams. These arrangements include up to 25% extra time, the use of word processors, a scribe, voice recognition software and a change of font for exam papers.

How to register a complaint

All candidates participating in courses run or provided on behalf of RCUK have a right to equality of opportunity and the RCUK, via the Course Centres has a duty to implement this policy.

Breach of this equal opportunity policy on grounds of disability is a serious matter. Any candidate who believes that he or she may have been disadvantaged on discriminatory grounds should write to the Course Director in the first instance for local resolution, detailing the grounds of their complaint. If no local resolution can be found, the matter can be referred to the RCUK for review by the course subcommittee Chairperson.

References

1. GMC position statement on the requirements for medical students and doctors in training gaining competence in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (December 2013).
2. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance> :page 6
3. <http://www.britishdyslexics.co.uk>